

Knowing of your interest in federal land management I thought you would be interested in [an exchange I had](#) at this week's Ways and Means Committee hearing. Though the Ways and Means Committee has jurisdiction over tax, trade and health policy, the chairman of the committee called this hearing to engage in a scientific discussion of the objectives that climate change legislation should seek to accomplish. I questioned Dr. Brenda Ekwurzel of the Union of Concerned Scientists, one of the witnesses, as to whether forest management to thin excess growth should play a role in decreasing greenhouse gas emissions through decreased wildfire risk and increased carbon sequestration. The Union of Concerned Scientists is a national organization based in Massachusetts that has opposed commonsense forest management plans and policies in our area based on their environmental protection views.

Our Northern California area continues to remain subject to increasingly catastrophic wildfire due to an overabundance of forest growth. These fires emit million of tons of greenhouse gases each year, on a scale that overshadows almost any other single emissions source. Responsible forest management should be used to reduce this risk and provide material for a variety of uses, including renewable biomass power. While Dr. Ekwurzel attempted to sidestep the intent of my question, she did allude to the fact that forest management could reduce the size and intensity of these fires. I am hopeful that the Union of Concerned Scientists and other groups who have opposed commonsense forest management activities will join other members of Congress and me in advocating more thinning in our national forests to improve forest health and protect the public and the environment from the devastating effects of wildfires. To view the full transcript of our exchange, please [click here](#).